数理解析研究所講究録
641巻 1988年 194-197

What can be said about w-vectors of finite partially ordered sets ?

Takayuki Hibi

Department of Mathematics
Faculty of Science
Nagoya University
Chikusa-ku, Nagoya 464, Japan

Any partially ordered set (<u>poset</u> for short) to be considered is finite. The cardinality of a finite set X is denoted by $\#(X)$. Let N be the set of non-negative integers and Z the set of integers.

§1. w-vectors

Let P be a poset with elements $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_p$ labeled so that if $x_i < x_j$ in P then $i < j$ in Z . Given an integer i , $0 \le i < p$, write $w_i = w_i(P)$ for the number of permutations $\pi = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & \cdots & p \\ a_1 & a_2 & \cdots & a_p \end{pmatrix}$ such that (a) if $x_{a_r} < x_{a_s}$ in P , then $r < s$ (i.e., π is a <u>linear extension</u> of P) and (b) $\#\{ r ; a_r > a_{r+1} \}$, the number of <u>descents</u> of π , is equal to i . We say that the vector $w(P) := (w_0, w_1, \ldots, w_{p-1})$ is the <u>w-vector</u>

of P. Consult [Stanley [Sta_2, pp. 211-221] for combinatorial background of w-vectors.

§2. Notation and terminology

A chain is a poset in which any two elements are comparable. The length of a chain C is defined by $\ell(C) := \#(C) - 1$. The rank of a poset P, denoted by $\mathrm{rank}(P)$, is the supremum of lengths of chains contained in P. If $\alpha \leq \beta$ in P, we write $\ell(\alpha,\beta)$ for the rank of the subposet $P_\alpha^\beta := \{ x \in P ; \alpha \leq x \leq \beta \}$ of P. A poset P is called pure if every maximal chain of P has the same length. We say that P satisfies the $\delta^{(n)}$-chain condition, $n \in N$, if (a) for any $\xi \in P$, the subposet $P_\xi :=$ $\{ y \in P ; y \geq \xi \}$ of P is pure and (b) $\mathrm{rank}(P) - \min\{ \ell(C) ; C$ is a maximal chain of $P \} = n$. Thus P satisfies the $\delta^{(0)}$-chain condition if and only if P is pure.

Give a poset P, we write $P\hat{}$ for the poset obtained by adjoining a new pair of elements, $0\hat{}$ and $1\hat{}$, to P such that $0\hat{} < x < 1\hat{}$ for any $x \in P$. A sequence $A = (\alpha_0,\beta_0,\alpha_1,\beta_1, \ldots,\alpha_t,\beta_t)$, which consists of elements of $P\hat{}$, is called rhythmical if (a) $\alpha_0 = 0\hat{}$, $\beta_t = 1\hat{}$, (b) $\alpha_i < \beta_i$ for any i, $0 \leq i \leq t$, (c) $\alpha_{i+1} < \beta_i$ for any i, $0 \leq i < t$ and (d) $\alpha_{i+2} \nleq \beta_i$ for any i, $0 \leq i \leq t-2$. Let $\ell(A) := \Sigma_{0\leq i\leq t}\, \ell(\alpha_i,\beta_i) - \Sigma_{0\leq i\leq t-1}\, \ell(\alpha_{i+1},\beta_i)$. We say that P satisfies the Δ-chain condition if $\ell(A) \leq \mathrm{rank}(P\hat{})$ for any rhythmical sequence A of $P\hat{}$. We easily see that, for any $n \in N$, the $\delta^{(n)}$-chain condition implies the Δ-chain condition.

§3. Results.

Now, what can be said about w-vectors of posets ? In the following, let $w(P) = (w_0, w_1, \ldots, w_{p-1})$ be the w-vector of a poset P with $\#(P) = p$ and $s := \max\{ i ; w_i \neq 0 \}$.

THEOREM (Stanley [Sta_2, (4.5.17)]). The sequence $w_0 , w_1 , \ldots, w_s$ is symmetric, i.e., $w_i = w_{s-i}$ for any i , $0 \le i \le s$, if and only if P is pure.

THEOREM (Stanley). The inequality

$$w_0 + w_1 + \ldots + w_i \le w_s + w_{s-1} + \ldots + w_{s-i}$$

holds for any i , $0 \le i \le [s/2]$.

THEOREM ([H_2]). Assume that P satisfies the Δ-chain condition. If i and j are non-negative integers with $i + j \le s$, then $w_i \le w_j w_{i+j}$.

THEOREM ([H_2]). Assume that P satisfies the $\delta^{(n)}$-chain condition. Then, the inequality

$$w_s + w_{s-1} + \ldots + w_{s-i} \le w_0 + w_1 + \ldots + w_i + \ldots + w_{i+n}$$

holds for any i , $0 \le i \le [(s-n)/2]$.

Our technique [H_2], which originated in [H_1], is heavily based on commutative algebra, especially the theory of canonical modules [Sta_1] of invariant subrings of tori [Hoc].

It would, of course, be of great interest to find a characterization of w-vectors of posets.

The author would like to thank Prof. Richard P. Stanley for helpful discussions relevant to this work.

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